

Building Inspection

Bill Schulze, Chief Building Official

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide courteous, prompt and professional building permit services by processing applications, reviewing plans and inspecting construction in the unincorporated areas of Placer County in order to verify that work complies with building codes for safe and habitable structures.

BUILDING INSPECTION FUND 100 / APPROPRIATION 22220

	Actual 2002-03	Budget 2003-04	Requested 2004-05	Recommended 2004-05	Change %	Adopted 2004-05
Expenditures						
Salaries and Employee Benefits	\$ 2,500,928	\$ 2,879,586	\$ 3,464,697	\$ 3,449,828	20%	\$ -
Services and Supplies	278,438	326,638	353,886	353,886	8%	-
Intra Fund Charges	4,769	11,023	7,915	7,915	-28%	-
Gross Budget:	<u>2,784,135</u>	<u>3,217,247</u>	<u>3,826,498</u>	<u>3,811,629</u>	18%	-
Intra Fund Credits	(130,085)	(125,904)	(109,000)	(109,000)	-13%	-
Net Budget:	<u>\$ 2,654,050</u>	<u>\$ 3,091,343</u>	<u>\$ 3,717,498</u>	<u>\$ 3,702,629</u>	20%	<u>\$ -</u>
Revenue						
Licenses, Permits and Franchises	\$ 2,142,959	\$ 2,063,044	\$ 3,489,792	\$ 3,489,792	69%	\$ -
Charges for Services	(93)	710	-	-	-100%	-
Miscellaneous Revenue	309,075	298,245	-	-	-100%	-
Total Revenue:	<u>2,451,941</u>	<u>2,361,999</u>	<u>3,489,792</u>	<u>3,489,792</u>	48%	-
Net County Cost:	<u>\$ 202,109</u>	<u>\$ 729,344</u>	<u>\$ 227,706</u>	<u>\$ 212,837</u>	-71%	<u>\$ -</u>
Allocated Positions	36	40	40	40	0%	-

CORE FUNCTION

Building Permit Services

Processes applications, issues building permits, reviews plans, conduct on-site inspections, maintains inspection records, and responds to citizens requests for information and to complaints for potential hazards and violations of code.

FY 2003-04 Major Accomplishments

- Updated building permit fees with the support of the construction industry.
- Participated with the other land development departments in preparing for the implementation of the computerized permits program.
- Continued microfilming permits and plans for completed projects. Permit records are required by law to be preserved and made available to the public.
- Updated handouts and information on the web page to reflect the latest codes and regulations.

Land Use Services

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FY 2004-05 Planned Accomplishments

- Meet our performance objectives.
- Implement computerized permits program.
- Continue to refine performance standards for plan check and field inspection.
- Update handouts to provide consistent and reliable information to the public.

Department Comments

Construction activity in Placer County continues to be strong. Revenues were, at the end of 2003, approximately 20% ahead of that point in 2002. With the increase in the fees beginning in January 2004, the fee study consultant, projected residential fees would increase approximately 21%. The department anticipates the overall increase to exceed 21%. Based on the strong construction trend and the fee increase we project revenues of \$3,489,792, an increase of 42% over our actual revenues for FY 2002-03.

The base budget requires a net county cost not to exceed \$718,397. Our submitted budget is \$227,706 net county cost, approximately \$490,691 below base budget. This includes filling all our vacant positions with permanent Full Time Equivalent (FTE) and upgrading the supervising building inspector in the Tahoe office to management. The department could achieve close to zero costs if the building permit revenue currently sent to Planning and Public Works were retained in the Building Department (estimates at \$200,000 for FY 2004-05), and we hope the current review of land development fees will evaluate sharing of building permit fees. Additionally, while our budget numbers are based on filling all our vacant positions, we propose to use extra-help initially as we monitor the economy. This strategy could potentially save another \$150,000.

The department proposed budget strategy is as follows:

- Initially use extra-help to fill vacant positions;
- Review the Tahoe office structure to strengthen decision-making and service;
- Work closely with the local industry and staff to streamline processes to improve productivity and quality of services (we have implemented an ongoing series of meetings with the construction industry);
- Adjust fees in January 2005 for pay raises not anticipated in the fee increase); and
- Recommend that one Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) position be added in the Tahoe office (not necessarily in the Building Department), if funding is available, to provide the needed organizational cohesiveness for implementing the memorandum of understanding between TRPA and Placer County.

County Executive Comments And Recommendations

Building Inspection continues to perform construction review service while building activity has remained strong in Placer County. Levels of services are challenged with larger and more complex project construction occurring, with strained department resources. Increased funding is recommended to fill all vacant positions as revenue is projected to grow due to the higher volume of permit activity anticipated, and increased fees as of January 1, 2004. This increase is expected to assist in enhancing service levels, and was recommended with the service level issue in mind. This budget is largely self-supporting through the collection of fees paid for services rendered.

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CORE FUNCTION: BUILDING PERMIT SERVICES

Applications & Permit Issuance Program

Program Purpose: To review applications, issue permits, and provide public information in order to ensure code compliance and safe, habitable buildings in a way that is as clear, efficient, and timely as possible.

Total Expenditures: \$2,678,549

Total Staffing: 28.0

- **Key Intended Outcome:** Construction applications are reviewed, permits are issued, and buildings are constructed in compliance with codes.

Applications & Permit Issuance Indicators:	Actual 2002-03	Projected 2003-04	Target 2004-05
# of applications received	5,163	5,700	5,700
#/% of applications processed within 5 weeks	4,163 / 80%	3,990 / 70%	5,130 / 90%

Program Comments: The building code specifically requires the Building Department to review plans for compliance with applicable codes. To perform this service in a timely manner (3-5 weeks turnaround for plan review is the target) the department needs qualified individuals, resources, working space and the organizational structure to achieve both productivity and quality control. Productivity declined in the current year due to lack of staffing and increase in permit applications, which fueled the review of building permit fees.

Building Inspections Program

Program Purpose: To inspect on-going construction during various stages to verify compliance with applicable codes and approved plans.

Total Expenditures: \$1,147,949

Total Staffing: 12.0

- **Key Intended Outcome:** Stakeholders can regard the as-built building to be in compliance with applicable codes.

Building Inspections Indicators:	Actual 2002-03	Projected 2003-04	Target 2004-05
# of building inspection requests	25,983	30,000	30,000
% conducted within 24 hours	90%	90%	90%

Program Comments: The building code requires the department to perform inspections for compliance with applicable codes. We continue a long tradition of providing this service in a timely manner and to do so, the department continues to need qualified individuals, resources, and the organizational structure to achieve both productivity and quality control.